

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A method for polishing a wafer comprising the steps of:
holding a wafer on a rotatable wafer holding plate; and
polishing a surface of the wafer being in contact with a polishing cloth adhered on a
rotatable table in such a state that a polishing agent is supplied onto the polishing cloth,
5 wherein the polishing agent is an alkaline solution which contains silica having particles
each in the shape of almost an sphere as a main component and further an organic base or a salt
thereof.

2. (Original) A method for polishing a wafer comprising the steps of:
holding a wafer on a rotatable wafer holding plate; and
polishing a surface of the wafer being in contact with a polishing cloth adhered on a
rotatable table in such a state that a polishing agent is supplied onto the polishing cloth,
5 wherein the polishing agent is an alkaline solution which contains silica dispersed almost
uniformly, the silica having particles each in the shape of almost an sphere and an average
particle diameter of 12 nm or less.

3. (Original) The method for polishing a wafer according to claim 2, wherein the
polishing agent is an alkaline solution which contains the silica as a main component and further
an organic base or a salt thereof.

4. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to claim ~~1 or 3~~, wherein the organic base or the salt thereof is a quaternary ammonium hydroxide.

5. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of claims~~claim 2 to 4, wherein an average particle diameter of the silica in a dispersion state is in the range of from 5 nm to 10 nm.

6. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of claims~~claim 2 to 5, wherein a maximum particle diameter of the silica in a dispersion state is 12 nm or less.

7. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of claims~~claim 1 to 6, wherein a pH value of the alkaline solution is in the range of from 10 to 13.

8. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of claims~~claim 1 to 7, wherein Na_2CO_3 is used for pH adjustment of the alkaline solution.

9. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of claims~~claim 4 to 8, wherein the quaternary ammonium hydroxide is tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide.

10. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of~~
~~claims~~claim 1 ~~and 3 to 9~~, wherein the organic base or the salt thereof is added up to a
dissolution limit of the polishing agent in use.

11. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of~~
~~claims~~claim 1 ~~to 10~~, wherein the wafer is a silicon wafer.

12. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of claims~~
~~1 to 11~~claim 1, which is performed in a rough polishing step (a primary polishing step and a
secondary polishing step) in a mirror polishing process.

13. (Original) The method for polishing a wafer according to claim 12, wherein the
rough polishing step is the second polishing step.

14. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of~~
~~claims~~claim 1 ~~to 13~~, wherein the silica is used at a concentration in the range of from 2 to 20
wt %.

15. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of~~
~~claims~~claim 1 ~~to 14~~, wherein the polishing cloth is of an unwoven cloth type.

16. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of~~
~~claims~~claim 1 ~~to 15~~, wherein hardness (Asker C hardness) of the polishing cloth is 50 or more.

17. (Currently Amended) The method for polishing a wafer according to ~~any of~~
~~claims~~claim 1 ~~to 16~~, wherein stock removal of the wafer is 1 μm or more.